

WIFE'S STRATEGY

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Right 188, by P. C. Eastment

"Are you there?" called Milton from the back door.

"Is it, pa?" asked his wife as she came to the door.

"Yes, Jim Thomas is coming down."

"Well, what of it?"

"He looks all dressed up."

"He's probably going to a dance somewhere."

"He's probably coming right here to see our Minnie."

"Then he'll have greased his boots or nothing. Minnie ain't waiting her time on no such fellows as Jim Thomas."

The farmer had more to say, but before he could say it Jim Thomas had arrived. He was a young man of twenty-five who had no particular occupation, but traded horses, helped to put up windmills and now and then acted as a piano agent.

He sat down beside the farmer, reached for his jackknife and a stick and proceeded to whittle and talk. Mrs. Milton came to the door to shake the tablecloth and gave him a nod. During the two hours he remained he saw nothing of Minnie. He seemed much disappointed.

When he had departed the farmer entered the sitting room and said to the wife:

"Look a-here, Martha, what's the use in hurting a fellow's feelings?"

"What fellow?"

"Jim Thomas, of course. You didn't say three words to him, and Minnie didn't appear at all. It was a regular snub, and I felt sorry for him."

"Then your sympathies are wasted. I want to tell you that Jim Thomas is a sneak, and if Minnie ever speaks to him again I'll box her ears, though she is going on nineteen years old."

The farmer sat down and pulled off his boots.

"Martha," he began, "I've known for two weeks that there was something up and that Minnie and you were keeping it from me. Now, then, I want to know all about it. Jim Thomas was down in the lot where I was at work today, and he had just begun to tell me that Minnie and Burt Anderson were mad at each other when Elder Davis came along and hung around so long that Jim had to go before finishing his story. You might as well tell me the whole story."

"I told you Jim was a sneak," answered the wife. "If he hadn't been there wouldn't have been any fuss between Minnie and Burt, and if he hadn't been he wouldn't have shown his face here tonight."

"This seems to be a 'tarnal nice howdy-do-two folks engaged to be married and fighting like cats and dogs. What's the row about?"

"Nothing but Burt's jealousy. Minnie wrote her name in an autograph album, and Burt found it out through Jim Thomas and gave her a blowing up about it. She sassed back, and he got mad, and that's the reason he hasn't been here for the last two weeks."

"What in thunder is an aw-to-graft album?" asked the husband after thinking for a minute or two.

"It's a book that folks write their names in, and you needn't swear about it. It belonged to a summer boarder down at Scott's."

"And all she did was to write her name in it?"

"That's all, though Jim made Burt believe the fellow was struck on Minnie and said she had eyes like a doe."

"What sort of a critter is a doe?"

"I don't know, and I don't care, and I want to tell you that you are not to mix into this business."

"But ain't I her father, and ain't it my business to go to Burt Anderson and tell him that Minnie is a hundred times too good for him?"

"No sir, it ain't! Abijah Milton, you are a thick headed man, and you are so nearsighted that you run against fences. If you had your way you'd spoil your only daughter's happiness forever. You are not going to have your way. You are going to fold your arms and keep still and let me work this thing out myself."

"By thunder, Martha, but—"

"Swearing some more! No wonder you have become afraid of lightning! Swearing won't help you, however. You have got to do as I say. If Jim Thomas comes around again you can talk about windmills all you want to, but don't talk about Minnie. If you see Burt Anderson use him just as you always have. The rest can be left to me."

"And what'll you do?" asked the husband and father.

"You wait and see. If you don't see Burt Anderson around here in less than two weeks then my name wasn't Martha Tompkins before I married you, and I didn't take a prize spelling the whole school down."

"I don't see a how!" But she interrupted him, saying it was time to wind up to bed, and during the

The word whenever he investigated of him: Burt Anderson working valiantly to clear in the field alongside the larvae the answer. has a think he'll be there tomorrow.

"be. Why?"

"why. Did our old horse Thos run away?"

had his run away if he wanted not be

"He might get up a sort of hen canter."

"Suppose," continued the wife, "that the lines were to get under his heels and some one was to hit him five or six cuts with the whip, would he break into a canter?"

"I guess he would. Yes, he'd be so astonished that he would probably dust along for a few rods."

"And would he keep to the road?"

"I guess he would. What are you asking all these questions for?"

"Perhaps I'll tell you this evening. Don't bother me now, as I've got three pairs of minnie to catch."

Farmer Milton had no sooner left the house for the fields next morning than his wife began fixing up a creek of butter for the village grocer, while Minnie harnessed the old horse to the demurest wagon and got ready to drive to town.

"Now, then, remember what I've told you. When you come along to the cornfield keep your eyes straight in front of you and don't look around even if Burt calls to you. Just make-out that you don't hear. On your way back when you get to the schoolhouse—"

"I understand," nodded the daughter.

"Don't forget the screaming part."

"No, but do you suppose?"

"There is no supposing about it. I am your mother, and I am no spring chicken. Now go on with you."

Burt Anderson was working in the cornfield that morning within two rods of the highway when he caught the pounding of hoofs and the rattle of wheels and looked up to see Minnie Milton driving by. He dropped his hoe and opened his mouth to call, but she struck the horse with the whip as if to hurry on. He couldn't say that she saw him, but he thought she did, and the thought hardened his heart. He had forgiven her "sassy" days and days ago and was ready to "make up," but this action on her part showed that she was punishing him. From then until 3 o'clock in the afternoon the young man managed to hoe about twelve hills of corn. The rest of the time was spent in sulking or sitting on the fence and looking down the village road. His waiting and sulking was rewarded at last. A mile away arose a cloud of dust kicked up by old Charlie's feet, and as it drew nearer and nearer the young man prepared to drop off the fence and hide. Minnie should not have the pleasure of shouting him again. He was on the ground when he heard a woman's screams for help. He heard the hoof beats of a horse on the gallop. He heard the clatter of a rickety old one horse wagon.

It was a runaway. Burt Anderson saw that it was the instant he got his head above the fence. It was Minnie returning home. The lines had fallen under the hoofs' feet, and she was standing up and swaying from side to side and screaming. There was a hero and a scene. There were explanations. There was no apology to old Charlie, though he certainly deserved one.

"No, I'm no spring chicken!" observed farmer Milton's wife to herself as she stood at her gate and saw that Burt Anderson was driving Minnie home and that Minnie's red cheeks had come back to her.

"Say, now, but how did you manage it?" whispered the husband to the wife that evening as the two lovers had the piazza to themselves.

"Manage what?" was the reply in a puzzled voice. "Abijah Milton, you are the thickest thick headed man I ever saw. How did I manage it! Just as if I'd been managing something—conspiring and plotting and all that sort of thing! There are certainly times when you make a body tired!"

A Surprise For Horace Greeley.

In the early days of the suffragist movement Miss Susan B. Anthony had no more bitter opponent than Horace Greeley, says a writer in the Boston Transcript. It was for a long time his custom to wind up all debates with the conclusive remark, "The best women I know do not want to vote."

When the New York constitution was being altered in 1847 Miss Anthony laid a train for him. She wrote to Mrs. Greeley and persuaded the editor's wife not only to sign a petition for woman's suffrage herself, but to circulate the paper and get 300 signatures among her acquaintances. In the committee Mr. Greeley, who was chairman, had listened to the debate and prepared to introduce to the convention an adverse report. He was just about to utter his usual "best" when George William Curtis rose.

"Mr. Chairman," said he, "I hold in my hand a petition for suffrage signed by 300 women of Westchester, headed by Mrs. Horace Greeley."

The chairman's embarrassment could hardly be controlled. He had found at least one of "the best women I know" wanted to vote, but he revenged himself later upon the leaders by seething editorials.

Italian Passion.

The emotional temperament of the Italians is shown even in their "agony advertisements." This is from an Italian paper: "Yesterday when I saw you I had not then received your dear letter. Imagine in what state of desolation I had been. The day was to me a veritable agony. I could not discover a reason for your silence. You may guess how I suffered. But at last yesterday evening I again saw your adorable handwriting. (Thanks, thanks with the whole of my soul). Thus, at any rate, we may part with tranquil hearts. But when I think we shall never see one another again my soul freezes. Write to me often, for I have need of your gentleness, and I have a foreboding that I shall succumb to the pestilential climate of the country I am going to. And I shall write every other day to you. To you all my soul, all my love, sweetest and most adorable creature."

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Notice is hereby given that the accounts of the subscriber, the survivor of the last will and testament of Lyman B. Kent, deceased, will be audited and stated by the Surrogate and reported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of the County of Essex, on Tuesday, the thirty-first day of July next.
Dated June 11, 1906.
JOHN C. KENT.
EDWIN B. GOODSELL, Proctor.

Notice of Settlement.
Notice is hereby given that the accounts of the subscriber, administrator of Abraham G. Yancey, deceased, will be audited and stated by the Surrogate and reported for settlement to the Orphans' Court of the County of Essex, on Tuesday, the thirty-first day of July next.
Dated June 7, 1906.
STEVANUS COCKEFAIR.
EDWIN A. RAYNER, Proctor.

ESTATE OF SETH COOK COMSTOCK
FURNISHED TO THE ORDER OF GEORGE E. RUSSELL, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned executrix of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to submit their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from presenting or recovering the same against the subscriber.
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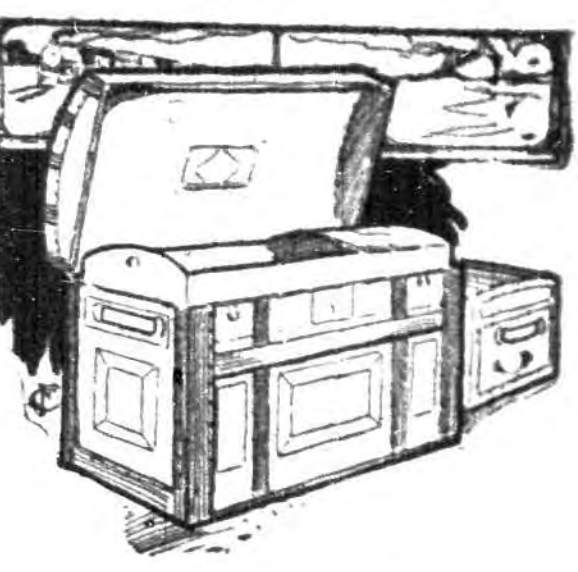
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